The division of the land is said almost invariably to entail lawsuits, and some litigations have been known to stretch over a period of a decade and more, for, as one resident of Mirebalais remarked, "Because of a few feet of land a peasant will, if necessary, spend a thousand gourdes at court." If a woman is the heir, her husband may intervene in a dispute to protect her interests, but if the matter goes to court, only the husband of a "married" wife has a right to appear as an interested party; the mate of a *plaçée* may only act as a witness. When minor grandchildren inherit, their mother, whether married or *plaçée*, is their legal guardian and may enter suit to protect their interests.

The rights of a woman to the property of her father may be nullified if a dowry has been given her husband at the time of her "legal" marriage, though dowries are rarely given among peasants. If she is a *plaçée*, or if a dowry had not passed at the time of her "marriage," the land she inherits from her parents is held by her for her children, who will in time inherit it from her, so that many parcels of land deemed by natives to belong to a single family group are found to be divided among people who bear different surnames. It is not without interest to note in passing that in contrast to the acrid disputes which characterize the settlement of a father's goods, the distribution of a mother's property is seldom disturbed by discussion.

In addition to land and money, which form the most important part of any estate, are the flocks, herds, and beasts of burden of the dead man, and his personal tools and implements. These are sometimes willed to brothers and sisters or favorite nephews. Land and money, however, may not be alienated, but must go to the man's own children or to such others as may have been legally adopted. A child can be deprived of participation in the estate only if formally disinherited by means of a sworn document attested before a notary. As has been stated, daughters who have been given